

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claim will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claim in the application.

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method of providing a client-side local assistant ~~system~~ program from an agent's computer system to a customer's computer system, the method comprising:

providing an agent Web site that presents a local assistant program download offer for viewing on the customer's computer system;

in response to selection by the customer's computer of a download link for the local assistant program download offer, invoking a server-side local assistant administrative system installed on the agent's computer system such that the local assistant administrative system transmits a local assistant installation agreement to the customer's computer system;

in response to receipt by the agent's computer system of an accepted local assistant installation agreement from the customer's computer system, installing a client-side ~~core~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program that remains active on the customer's computer system until disabled or uninstalled; and

in response to receipt by the agent's computer system of a request from the customer's computer system for a predefined ruleset and information database associated with the ~~core~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program, installing the predefined ruleset and information database on the customer's computer system

wherein the local assistant program runs on the customer's computer system while the operation of the local assistant program is modified by adding new rules to the ruleset.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A The method of claim 1, ~~and~~ wherein the ~~core~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes functionality that allows the customer's computer system to observe, analyze, and/or store information regarding a computer-mediated customer interaction.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A The method as in claim 2, and wherein the computer-mediated customer interaction comprises viewing a web page.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A The method as in claim 2, and wherein the computer-mediated customer interaction comprises playing music.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A The method as in claim 1, and wherein the ~~core~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes functionality that allows the customer's computer system to define periodic tasks to be performed by the customer's computer system, whether or not the user is interacting with the customer's computer.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A The method as in claim 5, and wherein the periodic tasks include gathering, analyzing and/or displaying information regarding predefined topics of interest.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): ~~A~~ The method as in claim 1, and wherein the ~~core~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes functionality that allows direct interaction between the ~~core~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program and the customer.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended) A computer-based system, installed on an agent's computer system, that provides for presentation of selection information on a customer's computer system, the computer-based system comprising:

~~A~~ a client-side ~~core~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program that, upon request by a customer, is downloadable from the agent's computer system to the customer's computer system and remains active on the customer's computer system until disabled or uninstalled; and

a server-side local assistant administrative system that, subsequent to download of the ~~core~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program to the customer's computer system, provides for access by the customer's computer system to at least one predefined ruleset and an associated information database relating to the selected information

wherein the local assistant program runs on the customer's computer system while the operation of the local assistant program is modified by adding new rules to the ruleset.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): ~~A~~ The computer-based system as in claim 8, and wherein the predefined ruleset and associate information database is downloadable from the agent's computer system to the customer's computer system.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 9, and wherein the server-side local assistant administrative system includes a merchant database that stores information relating to assisted merchants.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 10, and wherein, subsequent to download of the predefined ruleset and associated information database to the customer's computer system, selected portions of the merchant database are downloadable to the customer's computer system in accordance with rules included in the predefined ruleset.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 8 and wherein the ~~ere~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes functionality for specifying and/or interpreting rulesets for observing, analyzing and/or storing information regarding computer-mediated customer interactions.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 8, and wherein the ~~ere~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes functionality for defining periodic tasks to be performed by the customer's computer system.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 8, and wherein the ~~ere~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes functionality for direct interaction between the ~~ere~~ local assistant system and the local assistant administrative system.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 8, and wherein the ~~eeer~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes a rules interpreter ~~system~~ that retrieves and analyzes web documents related to the selected information.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 8, and wherein the ~~eeer~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes a rules interpreter ~~system~~ that creates and displays interactive windows related to the selected information.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 8, and wherein the ~~eeer~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes a rules interpreter system that reads and writes local interaction data related to the selected information for storage on the customer's computer system.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 8, and wherein the ~~eeer~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes a rules interpreter system that transmits requests to the server-side local assistant administrative system for ruleset updates.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): A The computer-based system as in claim 8, and wherein the ~~eeer~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes a rules interpreter system that transmits requests to update interaction data relating to the selected information and stored in the local assistant administrative system.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): ~~A~~ The computer-based system as in claim 8, and wherein the ~~ee~~ local assistant ~~system~~ program includes a rules interpreter system that allows the customer's computer system to interact directly with the ~~ee~~ local assistant system via browser navigation to a local reserved URL.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): ~~A~~ The computer-based system as in claim 20, and wherein the rules interpreter system includes functionality for parsing the local reserved URL to determine requested action and data to be determined by the customer's computer system.